Designing an Innovation School:
Perspectives from a School-University Partnership

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Abstract: Members of an Innovation School committee from Florida Gulf Coast University and the School District of Lee County share their individual and collective perspectives on designing a new traditional public school as an inquiry-based innovation school through an articulated partnership. Perspectives are shared through the lens of narrative inquiry and combined through a categorial analysis. This paper focuses on the essentials the themes from our shared perspectives have addressed to date. Narrative expressions are used to identify the accelerators, barriers, and next steps.

KEYWORDS: design-based research, innovation, inquiry-based, literacy, professional development schools, student agency, school-university partnerships

NAPDS NINE ESSENTIALS ADDRESSED:
Essential 1: A professional development school (PDS) is a learning community guided by a comprehensive, articulated mission that is broader than the goals of any single partner, and that aims to advance equity, antiracism, and social justice within and among schools, colleges/universities, and their respective community and professional partners.

Essential 2: A PDS embraces the preparation of educators through clinical practice.

Essential 3: A PDS is a context for continuous professional learning and leading for all participants, guided by need and a spirit and practice of inquiry.

Essential 4: A PDS makes a shared commitment to reflective practice, responsive innovation, and generative knowledge.

Essential 5: A PDS is a community that engages in collaborative research and participates in the public sharing of results in a variety of outlets.

Introduction

In August 2018, Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) and the School District of Lee County (SDLC) executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which articulated a shared understanding of the need to create a contemporary innovation school to develop, demonstrate, and cultivate new ways of learning. The impetus for the Innovation School was driven by a collective vision to create "a superb laboratory to experiment with the initiatives designed to improve student achievement" (Levine, 2006, p. 106). The goals of the PK-8 Innovation School include learner-centered, inquiry-based learning experiences where students have opportunities to become confident individuals, creative innovators, socially responsive problem-solvers, ethical entrepreneurs, and insightful leaders who thrive in an increasingly technological world. The MOU also specifies that the innovation school will serve as the primary Professional Development School (PDS) for the region to support in-service and pre-service teachers, school and district-level leaders, and teacher education and educational leadership faculty for continuous improvement in their research-based practices. The Innovation School is expected to become a model that can be replicated throughout the school district and in other educational settings across the state and nation. The Innovation School is scheduled to open at the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year.

In this paper, members of an Innovation School committee from FGCU and the SDLC share our individual and collective perspectives on our journey to date for designing a new traditional public school as an inquiry-based innovation school through an articulated partnership. Our perspectives are shared through the lens of narrative inquiry, combined through a categorial analysis where themes have been abstracted from the completed stories (Beale, 2013, as cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). We share our stories as well as our actions and doings in our committee work, all of which are narrative expressions (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). These narrative expressions guided us to discover the themes aligned to the National Association of Professional Development Schools Second Edition of the Nine Essentials, which include a comprehensive, articulated mission, clinical preparation, professional leading and learning, reflection and innovation, and research and results (NAPDS, 2021). While the Innovation School will ultimately incorporate all of the National Association of Professional Development Schools Second Edition of the Nine Essentials (NAPDS, 2021), this paper focuses on the essentials the themes from our shared perspectives have addressed to date. We also used our narrative expressions to identify the accelerators, barriers, and next steps discussed in this paper.

Context

FGCU is a comprehensive public university, offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs of strategic importance to the local area and beyond. The university's mission emphasizes innovative, student-centered teaching and learning, embraces diversity, nurtures community partnerships, values public service, encourages civic responsibility, and cultivates habits of lifelong learning and the discovery of new knowledge (FGCU, 2016). The College of Education (COE) prepares graduates for a wide range of careers from traditional PK-20 education to informal learning environments, programs for children with special needs, instructional design, educational media, and eLearning. COE programs are fully and nationally accredited, including the doctoral program for teachers, educational leaders/administrators, and other professional school personnel. The SDLC is a PK-12 public school district. In the 2020-2021 academic year the school district included 118 schools and more than 95,000 students. It is the 32nd largest school district in the nation with students from over 141 countries who speak more than 147 different languages. The student demographics in the school district are racially diverse; 41.4% Hispanic/Latino, 36.6% White, 14% Black/African-American, 1.7% Asian, and 0.2% Multi-Racial (SDLC, n.d.).

Our committee work has been centered around the Innovation School's vision to create innovative leaders and lifelong learners who positively impact an ever-changing society and its mission to foster educational learning opportunities that inspire individuals' innovative thinking, creative expression, collaborative engagement, effective communication, and critical thinking into action. Through innovation, research-based practice, and public engagement, the Innovation School will foster individuals to become innovative leaders and lifelong learners who hold emotionally sound and socially inclusive dispositions in the human community. These individuals will inspire people and organizations to improve the quality of life in our community, the state, the nation, and beyond.

Members of the PK-8 Innovation School committee ("the committee") include faculty and administration from the COE and school district leaders. Our committee has been meeting regularly since Fall 2018. We started our work by acknowledging our shared commitments and collaborative responsibilities, articulated in the MOU signed by both the university and the school district:

- Explore and identify a strategic location for the Innovation School to serve the district's diverse population.
- Consult in the architectural design of the Innovation School to support inquiry-based learning experiences in technologically innovative, open, and integrated spaces.
- Cultivate a culture of community-based relationships including business and industry partners for transformative PK-12 education in the region.
- Establish a joint organizational structure that supports shared leadership and administration of the school.
- Build a formal evaluation system supported by the state's Legislature and the Department of Education.
- Articulate and support establishing model residency programs for pre-service and in-service teachers, current and aspiring school and district leaders, and COE faculty to strengthen field-integrated practices as part of a PDS.
- Promote and support innovative research activities, research-based teaching, and learning practices.

- Develop a full document to outline the responsibilities of curriculum, finance, food service, human resources, instructional technology, operations, professional development, and research/service centers.

To date, the committee has identified a tentative location and initial design for the PK-8 Innovation School. At a school board briefing on March 23, 2021, the committee shared an update on its milestones, shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1
PK-8 Innovation School Committee Milestones through March 23, 2021
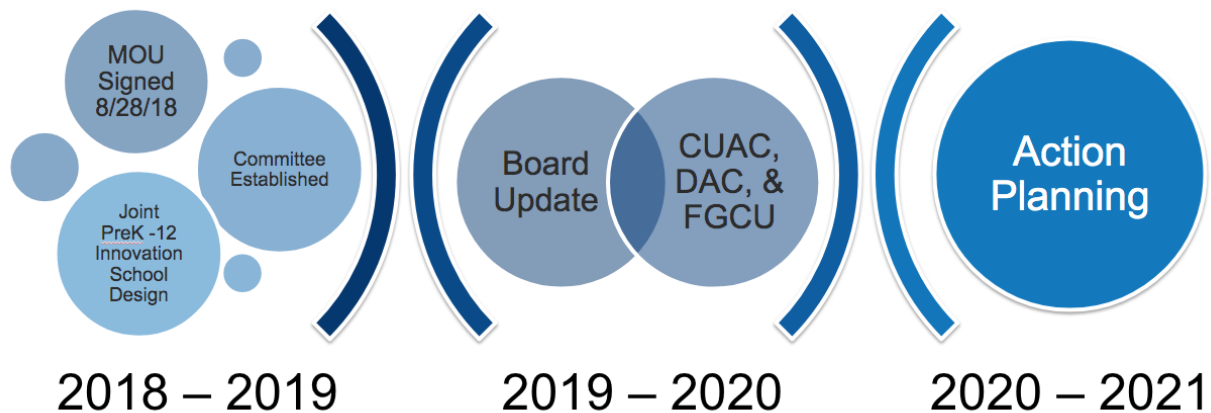
In the following sections, we share our perspectives from the themes aligned to the National Association of Professional Development Schools Second Edition of the Nine Essentials, which include a comprehensive, articulated mission, clinical preparation, professional leading and learning, reflection and innovation, and research and results (NAPDS, 2021). While the Innovation School will ultimately incorporate all of the Nine Essentials, this paper focuses on the essentials the themes from our shared perspectives have addressed to date.

Elements of Our Innovation School

A Comprehensive Mission

According to the National Association of Professional Development Schools, a PDS is a "community that is actively co-constructed by the partners" (NAPDS, 2021, p. 11) and "describes the shared promises of a collaborative community" (p. 15). Our reflections in this section describe our commitment to co-construction and collaboration. The Innovation School is truly an integration of academic and practitioner knowledge. Our MOU specifies that the innovation school will serve as the primary PDS for the region to support in-service and pre-service teachers, school and district-level leaders, and teacher education and educational leadership faculty for continuous improvement in their research-based practices.

Melissa Rodriguez Meehan (MM): The committee met bi-weekly discussing ideas, and together, we drafted a proposal with our collective vision. We continue to use this proposal as a

guiding document through this design process. This proposal went through various rounds of revisions as the team members discussed and debated what should be included. There were times where disagreements had to be resolved, but considering the mission of the Innovation School, "foster educational learning opportunities that inspire individuals' innovative thinking, creative expression, collaborative engagement, effective communication, and critical thinking into action", we were able to come to a consensus, particularly on the importance of this school being student-centered and providing for student agency. This mission aligns with the goals of ensuring a student-centered learning environment, which the team kept emphasizing as being crucial to the success of the Innovation School. The Innovation School, to me, is a beacon of hope, an opportunity to reimagine schools in our region, and to show the world what can be possible with collaboration, cooperation, determination, and resilience.

Helen Martin (HM): The committee convened in August 2018 with respective members from the FGCU and the SDLC. Committee members brought unique and varied expertise and experiences to the committee. Experiences ranged from classroom teacher, school-based administrator, district level leadership, college of education faculty, and higher education administration. Expertise of the group spanned across curriculum and instruction, educational leadership, educational technology, early childhood education, science, and literacy. Leaders of the committee united a diverse team around a common vision of a "utopia" for teaching and learning.

To unite the committee around a common vision of a "utopia" for teaching and learning, the committee leaders organized bi-monthly meetings around a series of proactive, yet reflective questions surrounding the committee members' own vision and experiences for teaching and learning. The first question included, "When I think about an Innovation School, I imagine…" and viewing and reacting to Sir Ken Robinson's video: "Are schools killing creativity?" The proactive questions led committee members to engage in conversation surrounding the current state of PK-12 public education, school-university partnerships, and teacher preparation programs. The collective participation of the group in critical discourse resulted in powerful educator learning and the emergence of disparate visions for the school-university partnership.

In spite of these meaningful discussions, the committee still held competing visions for an Innovation School and a school-university partnership. To continue the professional learning, we examined and explored innovative models for teaching and learning across the globe. Resources included *Creative Schools* by Sir Ken Robinson, *Teach Like Finland* by Timothy D. Walker, and *The Class* by Heather Won Tesoriero. We also examined videos of university school partnerships, such as the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools. In addition to reading books and viewing videos, we engaged in the identification of high-quality environments for teaching and learning within the region and beyond. Committee members visited different public schools within the SDLC, a community organization that provides wraparound services to school-age children and families, a state university laboratory school, and High Tech High, a public charter school in California. During each location visit, committee members observed classrooms, interviewed administrators, students, faculty, and staff when available. Through these experiences, we identified powerful aspects of architecture and physical layout, student progression, curriculum, assessment, parental involvement, professional learning, and instruction for students observed within these environments. The powerful aspects identified through reading, viewing videos, and visiting campus led us to collectively identify key pillars to include within the Innovation School. The opportunity for active and experiential learning increased our

collective knowledge and allowed us to converge around a core set of beliefs regarding teaching and learning.

Adam Molloy (AM): The Innovation School seeks to add to traditional community education approaches through the addition of university resources (interns, research, staff) in a traditional public-school setting. By collaborating with the College of Education at FGCU, the Innovation School design moves beyond its brick-and-mortar foundation, becoming more of a learning center that relies on outside partners to transform the educational experience and improve student outcomes. The Innovation School framework allows the school to be more open to involvement to not just FGCU staff and students, but to outside community organizations that can address necessary school needs.

By incorporating outside citizen involvement and prioritizing the educational experts at FGCU, we recognize that the localized issues in education would be best addressed by those developing the solutions. We have conducted needs assessments relative to the development of the school and its program offerings. The MOU appreciates the importance of shared facilities and the construction of a new school that honors community use of the school.

Clinical Preparation

Clinical practice supported through a strategic partnership in a well-resourced and designated site is a design principle for high-quality teacher preparation (Petrilli et al., 2019). Our perspectives shared in this section describe the ways the university's teacher preparation program is addressing some of the frameworks identified for the Innovation School. The Triple E (Experiential, Exploratory, Expeditionary) model and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework mentioned in this section focus on learner-centered approaches with an emphasis on removing barriers, allowing learners to access content and demonstrate proficiency in a variety of ways. As we move closer to the Innovation School opening date in fall 2025, we will use our work in the sub-committee described in this section to fully embed clinical practice into teacher preparation through our established university-school district partnership.

MM: The university and school district are targeting and developing specific professional development areas which will allow both pre-service and in-service teachers to explore UDL and Triple E frameworks. In an effort to prepare all teachers for the Innovation School and ultimately throughout the district, pre-service teachers are completing reflective discussions and assignments about UDL and what it means to incorporate student voice and choice in classrooms. This approach is also modeled for them in their teacher preparation program, as their input is requested and valued. Furthermore, pre-service teachers in my child development and social studies methods courses are given the space and opportunity to be creative, collaborate with their peers, and think critically about important educational topics. They are also given opportunities to choose how they complete their work, who they complete it with, and choose resources that best support their learning. I want them to experience these approaches, where they are not simply having knowledge transferred to them, but where they are really constructing their own knowledge and making the most appropriate decisions for their unique learning experiences; they are often co-constructors of the courses. An emphasis on inquiry-based approaches, such as project-based learning (PBL), is also included in the curriculum offered to pre-service teachers. Exposing pre-service teachers to this approach, even if just "planting seeds" in their minds, helps set the foundation for their future learning in the program, and future implementation in their classrooms. We hope that as these approaches

continue to be modeled for them, the more comfortable they feel and more likely they are to implement them in their future classrooms.

Nate Turcotte (NT): As a faculty member in an Educational Technology program at a university that has close ties to the school district and investment in the Innovation School, another challenge we are prioritizing is training our pre-service teachers to use effective and research-based approaches to technology integration (e.g., TPACK, SAMR) in addition to introducing them to emerging technologies (e.g., AR/VR), as well as programs like Hour of Code, Padlet, and Flipgrid, among others. We believe that providing our teacher candidates with these valuable experiences with technology will not only impact the Innovation School but the school district as a whole as many of our teachers end up being hired by the district upon graduation.

The professional development sub-committee has already begun to address many of these concerns but we, on the university side, must also verify that our pre-service educators are learning how to properly integrate technology into their future classrooms and are being exposed to the various technologies that continue to evolve. Also, once the school is built, there will be continued importance placed on my role, as there will be plenty of opportunities to work with the Media Specialist and the teachers to advocate for the use of technology in a pedagogically sound manner and provide research-backed strategies for technology use.

Professional Learning and Leading
Team Building and a Community of Practice (CoP)

In our Innovation School committee work, we are focused on team building. We recognize that the school district and the university working together disrupts traditional hierarchies and roles present in either institution, opening new doors, avenues, and opportunities for all (NAPDS, 2021, p. 13). As we continue to explore professional learning opportunities with the goal of making them available to all of the stakeholders involved in our partnership, we recognize that our work shares concepts of team building with concepts of a community of practice (CoP). Our perspectives in this section describe how our team has collaborated to identify areas for personal and collective growth and furthered our work to determine the manner in which professional learning occurs (Frazier et al., 2015).

Michele Garabedian Stork (MS): Committee members have focused on our common goals, our core values, and our shared beliefs. Has it always been easy? Of course, no. This is hard work that has forced us to try to find compromise between what could be if the committee could incorporate everything we know from the evidence about high-quality, equitable, inquiry-based learning experiences for all students and the current high-stakes accountability, compliance-focused learning environment that exists today. I am convinced the compromise exists even in a landscape of financial and political barriers, and the results can contribute to a transformational change in public education.

During my ten years working in PK-12 district administration, I saw first-hand the challenges of incorporating evidence-based best practices while meeting a myriad of barriers (i.e., unfunded mandates, decreasing numbers of teachers, high-stakes testing). There have been many times when our committee has had difficult conversations; for example, the committee discussed whether the Innovation School would be required to use the district curriculum and district-developed instructional guides. Initially, university faculty felt the Innovation School should have the freedom to use any curriculum and district staff felt the Innovation School had to

use the district-adopted curriculum in order to more easily disseminate our successful practices throughout the district. After several lengthy conversations, we collectively decided to use the district curriculum but integrate innovative pedagogical strategies focused on inquiry-based learning, such as PBL, UDL, and play-based learning. This collaborative decision was made because of our commitment to our shared vision, dialogue, and most importantly mutual trust. After four years, these key concepts are infused in our committee's way of work and help guide us when differing views are presented. While our committee has established itself as a team working towards the distinct end goal of opening an Innovation School, we do not foresee our committee dissolving once the school opens as would be the way a team is typically defined (Frazier et al., 2015). We believe our way of work has evolved over the past four years into a CoP. A CoP is ''defined by knowledge rather than by task and exists because participation has value to its members'' (Wenger, 1998, as cited in Frazier, 2015, p. 43). This value is demonstrated through our shared vision, dialogue, compromise, and mutual trust.

       HM: Professional development is a key lever to increase teacher effectiveness. As teacher effectiveness increases, student achievement increases (Nye, et al., 2004). The pathway to increasing teacher effectiveness is not always clear. However, the most effective professional learning results in changed teacher attitudes, beliefs, and instructional practice (Desimone, 2009). To approach the design of an innovation school, leaders first started with changing the perspective of school-university partners.

All teams progress through predictable stages of team development: forming, storming, norming, performing, and ending (Tuckman, 1965). A team's ability to quickly progress through the forming, storming, and norming phases ultimately determines the success of the team. The forming and storming stages of team development served as a barrier to the school-university partnership. School and universities alike experience natural silos through department membership. School representatives and university representatives often struggle to understand each other's reality as practitioner and/or scholar. Initially, the lack of relationships between the committee members served as a barrier to designing an Innovation School. Through meaningful and collective participation in professional learning, our team was able to enter the performing phase and create a common vision for innovative teaching and learning within the region and beyond.

Reflection and Innovation

Innovative Pedagogy

       An inquiry-based perspective accompanies the idea of innovative practice, as PDS participants should embrace a culture of examining how the design, implementation, and refinement of innovations influence each PDS participant as well as the teacher candidates and P–12 learners (NAPDS, 2021). In this section we share our visions for the design and implementation of the Innovation School's physical space and its connection to student-centered, innovative approaches to teaching and learning. We acknowledge the importance of ongoing reflection as part of our work, both in and on our actions (Schön, 1987, as cited in NAPDS, 2021).

       Cynthia (Dawn) Martelli (DM): Many define literacy as the ability to read and write. However, is it that simple? During my twenty-one years of teaching reading to students in public schools and to teacher candidates in higher education, I realized that the context of literacy is constantly changing. There are a variety of definitions and many different types of literacy.

During the Innovation School committee meetings, a new question arose: What does it mean to be literate in the 21st century? To be literate in the 21st century revolves around being literate in a multitude of ways where not only must one know how to read and write print texts, but one must also acquire the skills, understanding, and an open mind to innovation in the transformation and advancements of technology.

We unanimously decided that literacy would be the core of the innovation school. A place was needed for students to have access to unlimited resources and technology that support a wide range of student reading needs, abilities, and interests; a place for the development of attitudes and skills to enable students a space to create, build, work and to become independent, lifelong readers and learners; and a place for teachers to collaborate in the development of curriculum and instruction that would support students in the achievement of curricular and instructional goals. This place would be an open and interactive media center, and it would be the centralized activity hub or meeting area of the Innovation School.

As the design image developed among the committee members, this central media center design evolved into a main area that is completely open to the corridor and can spill out into that space with a second area that can be opened or closed through sliding glass panels, providing just enough solid wall to accommodate book collections while giving more floor space to content creation and activities. A modernized media center would incorporate design elements for inquiry-based explorations and embrace personalized learning as a tool to unlock the capabilities of every student thus allowing them to excel in their natural skills while giving additional support for identifying areas. There would need to be a variety of spatial options to support the ever-changing needs of students. The media center would support experiential learning through project-based learning and hands-on strategies allowing students to collaborate and explore their curiosities through inquiry and exploration. Technology has impacted the way students collaborate, share, and interact, creating the need for the media center to be learner-centered where students have unlimited access to various types of literature to assist them in their learning.

The heart of the centralized media center needs an informational literacy specialist. The committee created a position where the informational literacy specialist's responsibilities would include collaborating with students and other members of the learning community to determine learning and informational needs; joining with teachers and others to identify links across student information needs, curricular content, learning outcomes, and a wide variety of print, nonprint, and electronic information resources; and creating and maintaining an inviting, safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment that fosters intellectual inquiry.

The goal of the school's media center as the information hub of the school is to provide academic support to students and teachers in the form of print materials, online resources, literacy enrichment, information literacy instruction in the context of the curriculum, and technology support. The informational literacy specialist and teachers will promote reading for information and pleasure and strive to ensure students become effective producers and users of ideas and information.

MM: Student agency is at the heart of our Innovation School partnership, woven into discussions and proposals of both the design of the building and the pedagogical approaches we expect to integrate. In learning environments where student agency is prioritized, educators view students as problem solvers, capable of constructing their own knowledge (Vaughn, 2020). The learning environment belongs to the students, not just the teacher. Self-determination theory

(Ryan & Deci, 2000) aligns with student agency as it supports students' need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are vital in promoting positive social development and academic growth. Student agency includes learning through opportunities and activities that are meaningful and relevant to learners, giving them voice and choice throughout the learning process. Furthermore, learning environments that include student agency create structures and processes where students' perspectives inform teaching and learning practices (Cook-Sather, 2020).

One guiding principle that would support this mission, is a focus on authenticity and relevance. With an inquiry-based approach, the Innovation School will foster student questioning and curiosity in student-centered environments which provide opportunities for students to create meaningful, relevant work while making connections and applying their knowledge beyond the classroom. Students will have a variety of opportunities to explore their interests and solve real-world problems within their community.

The choice aspect in the classroom is one way to increase student motivation by appealing to students' need for autonomy and competence (Beymer & Thomson, 2015). Furthermore, meeting students where they are through developmentally meaningful and culturally congruent learning experiences is a foundational component of this partnership, and ultimately this school. In addition to pedagogical approaches, the design of the building is critical to the success of this school. The proposed design of the building includes assuring a physical learning environment that supports students' choice-based learning, honoring individual, small group, and large group spaces for dynamic learning engagement. The flexible learning environment will provide spaces for students to make decisions about how to explore their work while allowing teachers to accommodate students' individual needs. We hope to remove both physical and 'invisible' barriers to learning. These spaces will foster creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking among both learners and teachers.

NT: Given the mission and vision of the Innovation School, particularly its learner-centered focus through inquiry-driven methods, PBL became a natural support for leveraging educational technology effectively. Additionally, both the Triple E model and the UDL framework could conveniently include educational technology to position students as active constructors of their learning. For example, we envisioned students using technology to represent their learning in ways that were meaningful to them. This meant although students could be working on a project with the same goals, their use of technology and their final products could differ greatly.

Among the team, there continues to be complete agreement in using student-centered approaches that integrate technology. As I reflect back on our committee meetings, I can recall several instances where we discussed the importance of the Informational Literacy Specialist position and the media center space being a hub for the school. This space, and the prospective person in this role, would be responsible for collaborating with teachers and would serve as a resource for teachers looking to integrate appropriate technology for their students. In turn, this position and space is both critical to the design of the school and can serve as a metaphor for how we are conceptualizing how the school will function. We believe that centering on the media center will enable diverse uses of technology that will ripple throughout the rest of the school.

Research and Results

In this section, we describe our approach to research not only once the Innovation School opens, but as part of its development process. Our goal is to use our findings to improve practice and outcomes for all learners, contribute to improvement within the Innovation School and to the field of education, simultaneously renew both the SDLC and FGCU and inform educational policies (NAPDS, 2021). Identifying our challenges will not only improve our own process but may contribute to improving others who take on the work of designing a traditional public school as an inquiry-based innovation school through an articulated partnership.

Charles Wang (CW): Educational design research (EDR), according to McKenney and Reeves (2019), is a genre of research or a family of research approaches that "strive towards the dual goals of developing theoretical understanding that can be of use to others while also designing and implementing interventions to address problems in practice" (p.18). Scholars believe that EDR has demonstrated considerable potential because it advances design, research, and practice concurrently (McKenney and Reeves, 2018; Wang and Hannafin, 2005). Through EDR and with educational practitioners in the field, researchers engage in the collaborative research processes that design and implement educational interventions systematically to improve the design while they "ultimately seek to advance both pragmatic and theoretical aims affecting practice" (Wang & Hannafin, 2005, p. 6).

Establishing the Innovation School as a partnership between a university and local school district itself is innovative. The nature of this grand task determines there are multiple and multifaceted challenges ahead. Although we are very confident and capable of completing this task, the ways and approaches we take will impact the results we have at the end. As educational researchers, we believe in a scientific and pragmatic research approach to explore and provide solutions to problems in order to meet the challenges of establishing the Innovation School. This is because the challenges we face are not just limited to those of curriculum and instruction that can be addressed with standard empirical research through controls or manipulations of various existing factors in the classroom.

In the sections below, our narrative expressions are used to identify the accelerators, barriers, and next steps for the Innovation School. Accelerators are described as supporting our goals for the Innovation School to provide learner-centered, inquiry-based learning experiences where students have opportunities to become confident individuals, creative innovators, socially responsive problem-solvers, ethical entrepreneurs, and insightful leaders through civic modeling, informational literacy, educational design research, and education change theory. Barriers to our Innovation School goals are shared including issues in teacher preparation, the impact of COVID-19 on instructional practices and student learning, the role of educational technology, and challenges in family-school connections. Lastly, next steps are shared including how our team plans to involve students and community members and continue to expand professional development opportunities.

Accelerators

AM: The significance of the community in education is related to the responsibility of public schools to develop the capacity of students to participate in a democratic society, as agents connected to diverse people and organizations. The Innovation School collaboration will assist in not just teaching the state standards but also tap into the civic modeling inherent in opening up schools to community participation. Since the Innovation School is planned to be built in a

student assignment zone that has a high percentage of academically vulnerable students, the partnership has the potential to generate more parental involvement in the school. FGCU interns will supplement traditional staff, providing extra interventions to best support student achievement.

DM: The ability to find and use information, informational literacy, is the keystone of lifelong learning. Creating a foundation for lifelong learning is at the heart of the centralized media center of the Innovation School. The heart of the media center needs an informational literacy specialist. Just as the media center has moved far beyond a room with books to an active, technology-rich learning environment with an array of information resources, the informational literacy specialist focuses on the process of learning rather than dissemination of information. The centralized media center combines effective learning and teaching strategies and activities with information access skills. Information availability will undoubtedly continue to cultivate into the next century, which will make the media center even more essential to help its users acquire the skills they will need to harness and use information for a productive and fulfilling life. The informational literacy specialist can use the information literacy standards for student learning to create and maintain a design for a broad learning community—students, teachers, administrators, parents, and the neighborhood—that will support lifelong learning.

CW: Conducting EDR while designing the Innovation School is new and challenging to us. At the same time, it is rewarding with real problems solved and with new understandings obtained. We have learned so much from our progress as well as our challenges in this grand endeavor by conducting EDR with the Innovation School. After almost four years of work, we are confident in our approach to conduct EDR to support the establishment of the Innovation School, we are confident with our EDR results and merits in solving critical problems, and we are confident in establishing the Innovation School for student success.

MS: The study of efforts at school change over the last several years have led to a growing body of literature on new theories for school change (Day et.al, 2016; Fullan, 2009; Reinholz & Andrews, 2020). Glickman, et. al (2018) refers to these as education change theory. This body of research shares some key concepts, capacity, commitment, and support. The benefits of having the committee meet regularly and consistently since 2018 has built our capacity and commitment to design a truly innovative school through dialogue, trust, and a defined vision. The Innovation School partnership between the university and the school district demonstrates the external and internal support necessary for change.

Barriers

MM: The overall vision and mission of the Innovation school comes with a variety of barriers to successful implementation and sustainability of these innovative practices. Financial implications, teacher shortages, and declining enrollment in teacher preparation are some to consider. Additionally, to the removal of power dynamics and control and compliance policies that have not always allowed for this type of learning environment. We hope to combat some of these barriers by receiving ongoing community and legislative support and identifying areas for improvement in terms of professional development and teacher support.

HM: Committee membership continues to change. As a result of changes in members, team dynamics continue to shift. Throughout the almost four-year period, the district has transitioned to a new Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer. The Dean of the College of Education unfortunately passed away, and an interim Dean has joined the committee. New

leadership from both the school-university sides creates a barrier for the Innovation School The barrier includes a need for a strong onboarding plan to bring new team members up to speed on the professional learning, so they can quickly commit to the mission and vision.

The past two years ushered in a myriad of innovations for teacher professional learning. These innovations disrupted the notion of a "sage on the stage." With the transition to remote teaching and creation of innovative instructional models, expert practitioners and scholars learned alongside novice teachers and their students. With school shutdowns and work from home, educators gained access to professional learning around the clock and across the globe. In spite of these innovations, education continues to face insurmountable challenges that include a dwindling workforce and students suffering academically and socially-emotionally. In order to design an Innovation School that is relevant and responsive to the challenges faced by the profession, the professional learning of the committee will continue to investigate and research the impact of COVID-19 on the profession and exemplary models of response.

NT: Of course, the use of any emerging technology and unfamiliar pedagogical methods can provide significant barriers that need to be considered. For instance, after joining the committee, I found the committee having frequent conversations establishing the importance of providing proper professional development opportunities. Indeed, professional development became such an important topic to the team that we decided to create a professional development subcommittee that would develop topics of interest (e.g., UDL, PBL, etc.). As this committee develops training, we continue to think about the role of educational technology in supporting teaching and learning.

AM: There are several barriers to establishing the Innovation School as an effective community school model. Lohmann, Hathcote, and Hogan (2018) identified parental knowledge and attitudes, disparity between families and schools, current family situations, and logistical issues as the four major barriers to establishing a family-school collaboration. These barriers have the potential to prevent the Innovation School from developing into a community education site. Since FGCU staff will be serving as the outside community organization, there is still a need to have additional parental and community involvement.

Next Steps

MM: Although the support for pre-service and in-service teachers is a top priority, the committee seeks to have stakeholder input in the design process. Various stakeholders will be included in the process. However, we will begin with the students, and ask for their input and expertise into what they feel "school should be". More specifically, past, current, and future students will have opportunities to share how they envision their schools, what was wonderful in their PK-12 experiences, and what they wished they would have had. Students will reflect on their own learning experiences and assist in creating a school that is truly for them. As we move forward, an emphasis on learner-centered approaches to promote and support student agency will remain and we are looking forward to the opportunity to have direct input from students, demonstrating to them that student agency is truly an integral piece of this school.

AM: The next steps for the Innovation School and the community at-large are connected. Effective communication between the Innovation School team and prospective parents from before open enrollment to after assignment will be crucial. Parents and the larger community will need to understand what the Innovation School is and how it is different in its design and programming. This can be accomplished through shared community resource events, the

SDLC's Parent University, and in a collaboration with the Student Assignment Office. The Community Engagement Plan for the Innovation School focuses on building engagement infrastructure, community partnerships and effective communication, shared FGCU and SDLC communication materials, and in-person forums to engage and inform.

      HM: As the Innovation School team enters a new phase to turn vision into reality, professional development becomes a priority. As the committee grows, the team seeks to build new team members' understanding of the collective mission and vision and prior understandings. As the committee seeks to staff the school, university partners will begin to create and pilot professional development modules for Lee teachers. Pilot professional development opportunities include simulations in classroom management, early childhood support for student voice, choice, and play, an introduction to UDL, and application of UDL. The committee will pilot these opportunities at the SDLC's Summer Professional Learning Series for teachers where over 1,400 educators will have the opportunity to choose between 350 sessions during a five-day period. Educators who attend sessions led by the committee will then choose to continue to engage in job-embedded professional development throughout the school-year. Job-embedded support will assist teachers in applying strategies learned during the summer sessions. Committee members will collect data and feedback from participants to inform future professional development offerings. Feedback and learnings from participants will be used to refine professional development offerings and eventually create a core menu of professional development for teachers and leaders who will one day teach students and lead the Innovation School.

Conclusion

      In this article, members of an Innovation School committee from Florida Gulf Coast University and the School District of Lee County share their perspectives on our journey to date for designing a new traditional public school as an inquiry-based innovation school through an articulated partnership. Their stories guided us to identify the themes aligned to the National Association of Professional Development Schools Second Edition of the Nine Essentials, which included a comprehensive, articulated mission, clinical preparation, professional leading and learning, reflection and innovation, and research and results (NAPDS, 2021). Our narrative expressions were used to identify the accelerators, barriers, and next steps for the Innovation School.

      While the Innovation School will incorporate all of the National Association of Professional Development Schools Second Edition of the Nine Essentials (NAPDS, 2021), this paper focuses on the essentials the themes from our shared perspectives have addressed to date. We look forward to continuing our committee work as part of a learning community guided by our shared vision to foster individuals to become innovative leaders and lifelong learners who hold emotionally sound and socially inclusive dispositions in the human community. These individuals will inspire people and organizations to improve the quality of life in our community, the state, the nation, and beyond.

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